

# IDAHO EMPLOYMENT

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**IDAHO**  
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## State Overview

### OCTOBER UNEMPLOYMENT RATE AT RECORD LOW 3.2 PERCENT

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for October fell back to a record low 3.2 percent, matching the rate in March. The rate was down one-tenth of a percentage point from September and four-tenths below the 3.6 percent rate recorded one year earlier.

October continued an historic, 18-month streak of unemployment rates below 4 percent.

Idaho's unemployment rate also remained below the national rate of 4.4 percent, which decreased from 4.6 percent in September. The October rate was the lowest for the nation since May 2001.

Statewide, there were 3,800 fewer workers on the job in October, dropping the total number of people employed to 733,500. That loss combined with 1,600 fewer jobless workers resulted in the labor force declining 5,400 to 757,400 in October. Still, there were 15,500 more people working than in October 2005, and the number of unemployed people was 2,800 below a year ago.

It is not anticipated that there will be any significant changes in the rate through the end of the year.

Seasonal job losses were seen in construction, administrative and support services and leisure and hospitality. Cold, wet weather affected road and building construction, the demand for temporary workers declined, and there was a lull in recreation and tourism-related jobs between the summer and winter seasons.

### AREA LABOR FORCE DEVELOPMENTS

Unemployment rates are calculated each month for Idaho's 10 labor market areas. State Table 1 on page 3 lists the counties located in each labor market area along with October labor market statistics.

The Boise metropolitan area had 39 percent of the state's labor force and total employment. Thirty-three percent of the state's unemployed live there. In 2002 and 2003, the unemployment rate for this area rose to 5 percent following five years of unemployment rates at or below 4 percent. In 2005, the unemployment rate was below 4 percent and during the first 10 months of 2006, the rate in the metropolitan area has been below 3 percent. In October it was one of the lowest in the state at 2.7 percent. Industries with more than 20,000 jobs include health care, administrative and support services, accommodation and food services, retail trade, construction, local and state government and computer and electronic products manufacturing. More information on this area can be found in the southwestern Idaho section of the newsletter on page 13.

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The Grangeville area had the smallest portion of the state's labor force at 1.2 percent, but the area's 538 unemployed people comprise 2.3 percent of the state's total unemployed and results in a 6.1 percent unemployment rate, the highest among the 10 labor market areas. Unfortunately the current unemployment rate is above the 5.6 percent of October 2005. Industries with more than 350 jobs are retail trade, local education, health care, federal government, accommodations and food service, wood products manufacturing and construction.

The Coeur d'Alene area is the only single county metropolitan area in the state. It has the second largest share of the labor force and total employment in the state at 9.2 percent. The number of unemployed accounted for 9.6 percent of the state total. October's unemployment rate, 3.3 percent, was down from October 2005's rate of 3.8 percent. Industries which provide more than 3,000 jobs in the area are accommodation and food services, health care, construction, retail trade, administrative services and education.

Coeur d'Alene, the major city in the area, has experienced significant population growth and is well known for its attractions for tourists and business conferences. With a labor force of 22,000, the unemployment rate was the lowest in the area at 3.3 percent in October. More information about this area can be found in the northern Idaho section of the newsletter on page 7.

The traditional dividing line between northern and southern Idaho is the Salmon River. It joins the Snake River in the northern portion of Hells Canyon on the Idaho-Oregon border. The Snake River flows north until it turns west at the confluence of the Clearwater River near Lewiston and Clarkston, Wash. The two cities are the nexus of the Lewiston Labor Market Area, which is comprised of Nez Perce County in Idaho and Asotin County in Washington. The area is often referred to as the "Seaport" area because of its inland port used primarily to barge wheat over the Snake and Columbia River system to the Portland area. The Lewiston area's unemployment rate has ranged from 4.8 percent in May and September to 3.3 percent in both January and February. In recent years the area has experienced a slowdown in population growth, and job losses have been experienced in several industrial sectors including construction, leisure and hospitality and education. The October unemployment rate was 4 percent, still above the statewide average but below the 4.8 percent recorded for October 2005. More information about this area can be found in the north central Idaho section of the newsletter on page 10.

There are three labor market areas in south central Idaho. Two are a combination of counties that straddle the Snake River.

The Twin Falls area includes Jerome and Twin Falls counties, and the Burley area includes Cassia and Minidoka counties. These areas rely heavily on agriculture and depend on the Snake River system with its enormous underground aquifer for irrigation water. Twin Falls is the population center of south central Idaho and has an increasingly diverse economy that has accompanied robust population growth. This diversification usually means the Twin Falls area has a lower unemployment rate and is less seasonally volatile than the

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neighboring Burley area. The October unemployment rates of 2.9 percent for Twin Falls versus 3.7 percent for Burley are indicative of this difference.

The Hailey area includes Blaine and Camas counties. The industrial makeup of the area is very different with accommodation and food services, construction, government and retail trade dominating. The area also has the lowest unemployment rate of the three at 2.3 percent in October.

In eastern Idaho, the Pocatello area is a combination of Bannock and Power counties. It has enjoyed a decade of population growth and economic diversification that have helped mitigate previous job losses in chemicals and railroads. At 3.4 percent, the area's October unemployment rate was slightly above the statewide rate.

Up the Snake River lies the two-county Idaho Falls area. Idaho Falls in Bonneville County is the major city in the area that also includes Jefferson County. This area is primarily known for two things — potatoes and atoms. That is not to downplay the importance of almost all the region's service-providing industries, but its significant potato growing, processing and support businesses along with the nuclear-focused Idaho National Laboratory are key to the area's economic condition and stability. The unemployment rate usually has been below the state's in recent years, and October was no exception at 2.4 percent.

The Rexburg area, encompassing Madison and Fremont counties, is dominated by a four-year private university — Brigham Young University-Idaho. The university has over 12,000 full-time and part-time students. The two counties only have a population of 43,200 with 42 percent under 19 years of age. There are more than 6,000 people in these two counties that are of college age — 20 to 24, and nearly one-fourth of the jobs are in the education sector. Retail trade ranks second in private sector jobs but at less than half the number as private education. In October, the Rexburg area had an unemployment rate of 2.7 percent. The average unemployment rate has been under 4 percent for the past seven years.

## COUNTY LABOR FORCE DEVELOPMENTS

Only six rural counties reported unemployment rates of 6 percent or more. Clearwater County reported the highest rate at 8.5 percent. A year ago, seven rural counties posted jobless rates of 6 percent or more, and only one — Clearwater — was above 9 percent at 9.5 percent.

The lowest county unemployment rate in October was 1.7 percent in Teton County. Eleven additional

State Table 1: October 2006 Labor Force (preliminary)				
Seasonally Adjusted	Labor Force	Unemp.	% Unemp.	Total Emp.
<b>Lewiston MSA</b>	28,286	1,152	4.1	27,134
Nez Perce County	18,401	694	3.8	17,707
Asotin County, WA	9,886	459	4.6	9,427
<b>Boise City-Nampa MSA</b>	294,923	7,914	2.7	287,009
Ada County	195,959	4,681	2.4	191,278
Boise County	4,364	117	2.7	4,248
Canyon County	82,016	2,722	3.3	79,294
Gem County	7,523	274	3.6	7,248
Owyhee County	5,061	120	2.4	4,941
<b>Pocatello MSA</b>	45,629	1,555	3.4	44,073
Bannock County	42,121	1,421	3.4	40,700
Power County	3,507	134	3.8	3,373
<b>Idaho Falls MSA</b>	61,635	1,501	2.4	60,134
Bonneville County	50,792	1,207	2.4	49,585
Jefferson County	10,843	294	2.7	10,549
<b>Coeur d'Alene MSA*</b>	69,522	2,283	3.3	67,238
<b>Burley MicSA</b>	20,179	740	3.7	19,440
Cassia County	10,371	330	3.2	10,041
Minidoka County	9,808	410	4.2	9,399
<b>Rexburg MicSA</b>	21,204	562	2.7	20,641
Fremont County	6,020	197	3.3	5,824
Madison County	15,183	366	2.4	14,818
<b>Twin Falls MicSA</b>	50,128	1,442	2.9	48,686
Jerome County	10,638	318	3.0	10,320
Twin Falls County	39,490	1,124	2.8	38,366
<b>Grangeville SLMA</b>	8,766	538	6.1	8,227
Idaho County	7,049	487	6.9	6,563
Lewis County	1,716	51	3.0	1,665
<b>Hailey SLMA</b>	16,074	376	2.3	15,698
Blaine County	15,388	349	2.3	15,040
Camas County	685	27	3.9	658
Adams County	2,015	135	6.7	1,880
Bear Lake County	3,152	95	3.0	3,057
Benewah County	4,114	336	8.2	3,778
Blackfoot MicSA (Bingham County)	21,514	692	3.2	20,821
Bonner County	21,161	816	3.9	20,345
Boundary County	3,842	300	7.8	3,541
Butte County	1,240	46	3.7	1,193
Caribou County	3,328	117	3.5	3,210
Clark County	525	17	3.2	509
Clearwater County	3,236	274	8.5	2,963
Custer County	2,840	97	3.4	2,743
Mountain Home MicSA (Elmore County)	10,823	472	4.4	10,351
Franklin County	6,217	149	2.4	6,068
Gooding County	9,165	236	2.6	8,929
Moscow MicSA (Latah County)	17,997	652	3.6	17,345
Lemhi County	4,537	253	5.6	4,284
Lincoln County	2,707	91	3.3	2,617
Oneida County	2,456	58	2.3	2,398
Payette County	10,026	546	5.4	9,480
Shoshone County	5,758	388	6.7	5,370
Teton County	4,181	71	1.7	4,109
Valley County	5,073	190	3.7	4,883
Washington County	4,973	269	5.4	4,703
<b>State of Idaho</b>	<b>757,440</b>	<b>23,906</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>733,534</b>
<b>Idaho Cities</b>				
Boise	124,850	3,160	2.5	121,689
Caldwell	22,320	732	3.3	21,589
Coeur d'Alene	30,734	797	2.6	29,937
Idaho Falls	15,519	550	3.5	14,970
Lewiston	32,089	1,165	3.6	30,925
Meridian	29,063	838	2.9	28,225
Nampa	20,706	587	2.8	20,120
Pocatello	21,870	355	1.6	21,516
Twin Falls	15,487	561	3.6	14,926

\* Coeur d'Alene MSA includes all of Kootenai County.

counties reported rates under 3 percent — Blaine and Oneida at 2.3 percent, Ada, Bonneville, Franklin, Madison, and Owyhee at 2.4 percent, Gooding at 2.6 percent, Boise and Jefferson at 2.7 percent and Twin Falls at 2.8 percent. One year ago there were 10 counties below 3 percent — Oneida, Madison, Blaine, Bonneville, Franklin, Owyhee, Ada, Teton, Lewis and Gooding.

A comparison of October 2006 with October 2005 shows that only four counties — Camas, Idaho, Lewis and Oneida — had a higher unemployment rate this year than last. The year-over-year differences were only a few tenths of a percentage point.

### **Industry Highlights**

Nonfarm payroll jobs in Idaho declined by 1,100 between September and October for a 0.2 percent reduction. But compared to one year ago, there were 28,100 more jobs, a 4.5 percent increase. If the year-over-year job gain was divided by 12 months, the average monthly job gain would be 2,300 or an increase of 0.4 percent.

From September to October, goods-producing industries lost 400 jobs while service-providing industries dropped 700. The loss of 600 jobs in construction was offset by the addition of 500 jobs in the food manufacturing sector. The slowdown in residential construction is reflected in the loss of 250 jobs in the residential sector coupled with 300 jobs in specialty contractors. While residential construction projects are slowing, commercial construction continues to be strong. This is the second consecutive monthly decline in construction jobs, but it remains a healthy industry as shown by the 7,600 job increase from one year ago. The largest job growth in 2006 was in construction.

The number of jobs continues to grow but at a more normal rate. The growth in food manufacturing is a result of the increased demand for workers as the sugar beet harvest and processing began in earnest in October.

Job gains in education were not enough to counteract job losses in the state's tourism industry from September to October, which is generally the fall trend. Food services lost 900 jobs, accommodations was down 400 and arts, entertainment and recreation services declined by 1,400. Many of the lost government administration jobs were seasonal as the state parks closed for the winter, local parks no longer needed additional maintenance and summer recreation programs ended. These activities resulted in a loss of 1,100 jobs statewide.

Year to year, nonfarm jobs grew across all major industries. Construction, retail trade and administrative and support services remained the growth leaders. Idaho has consistently ranked in the top five states for job growth throughout 2006.

Goods-producing industries, which added 9,000 jobs, had the largest percentage year-over-year growth. The leading industry was the same one that has shown year-over-year gains consistently throughout both 2005 and 2006 — construction, which has generated 7,600 new jobs. The manufacturing sector reported a gain of 1,400 jobs since October 2005. Although most manufacturing industries reported job growth, fabricated metal and computer manufacturing reported the largest increases at 400 and 500 respectively.

Other durable goods and federal government accounted for most of the year-over-year job loss in the service sector.

### **Agricultural Employment**

October is the traditional peak month of the harvest season. The demand for irrigators decreases, but there is an increased need for truck drivers and other harvest workers. The potato harvest is nearly completed, but the sugar beet harvest is just beginning. There is also some fall field preparation taking place. The need for ranch hands and dairy workers continues, and pre-harvest work on Christmas tree farms, primarily in the northern Idaho, requires workers.

Potato and sugar beet growers needed truck drivers, product graders, sorters, packers and shippers in October. In the case of potato growers, these activities led to an interesting data quirk. Many growers have on-farm "fresh pack" operations, which involve grading, storing, packing and shipping unprocessed potatoes to food distributors. These operations and their work forces usually are classified as agricultural. If the facility is not located on the farm or is operated as a separate business enterprise, the work force is classified as wholesale trade in nondurable goods.

Harvest activities were the reason for the 3.2 percent increase in the number of jobs from September to October. All of the increase was in the hired workers category.

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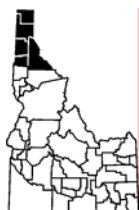
State Table 4: Nonfarm Payroll Jobs					% Change From	
BY PLACE OF WORK	Oct 2006*	Sep 2006	Oct 2005	Last Month	Last Year	
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	652,500	653,600	624,400	-0.2	4.5	
<b>GOODS-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES</b>	126,300	126,700	117,300	-0.3	7.7	
<b>Natural Resources &amp; Mining</b>	4,600	4,700	4,600	-2.1	0.0	
Logging	2,000	2,000	2,200	0.0	-9.1	
Mining	2,600	2,700	2,400	-3.7	8.3	
Metal Ore Mining	800	800	700	0.0	14.3	
<b>Construction</b>	56,200	56,800	48,600	-1.1	15.6	
<b>Manufacturing</b>	65,500	65,200	64,100	0.5	2.2	
Durable Goods	41,400	41,600	40,400	-0.5	2.5	
Wood Product Manufacturing	8,200	8,300	7,900	-1.2	3.8	
Sawmills & Wood Preservation	2,500	2,600	2,700	-3.8	-7.4	
Veneer & Engineered Products	2,000	2,000	1,600	0.0	25.0	
Other Wood Product Manufacturing	3,700	3,700	3,600	0.0	2.8	
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	4,400	4,400	4,000	0.0	10.0	
Machinery Manufacturing	2,700	2,700	2,600	0.0	3.8	
Computer & Electronic Product Manufacturing	16,300	16,300	15,800	0.0	3.2	
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	3,300	3,300	3,000	0.0	10.0	
Other Durable Goods	6,500	6,600	7,100	-1.5	-8.5	
Nondurable Goods	24,100	23,600	23,700	2.1	1.7	
Food Manufacturing	15,700	15,100	15,500	4.0	1.3	
Fruits & Vegetable Preserving & Specialty	7,400	7,400	7,600	0.0	-2.6	
Paper Manufacturing	1,600	1,600	1,600	0.0	0.0	
Printing & Related Support Activities	1,900	1,900	1,900	0.0	0.0	
Chemical Manufacturing	2,100	1,900	1,900	10.5	10.5	
Other Nondurable Goods	2,800	3,100	2,800	-9.7	0.0	
<b>SERVICE-PROVIDING INDUSTRIES</b>	526,200	526,900	507,100	-0.1	3.8	
<b>Trade, Transportation, &amp; Utilities</b>	129,000	128,900	125,200	0.1	3.0	
Trade	108,500	108,500	105,400	0.0	2.9	
Wholesale Trade	28,200	28,400	27,200	-0.7	3.7	
Wholesalers, Durable Goods	13,300	13,300	12,700	0.0	4.7	
Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	12,200	12,300	11,900	-0.8	2.5	
Retail Trade	80,300	80,100	78,200	0.2	2.7	
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	12,100	12,300	11,700	-1.6	3.4	
Building Material and Garden Equipment	9,800	9,900	9,300	-1.0	5.4	
Food & Beverage Stores	12,500	12,600	12,400	-0.8	0.8	
General Merchandise Stores	16,800	16,500	16,000	1.8	5.0	
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	20,500	20,400	19,800	0.5	3.5	
Utilities	2,000	2,000	1,900	0.0	5.3	
Transportation & Warehousing	18,500	18,400	17,900	0.5	3.4	
Rail Transportation	1,300	1,300	1,100	0.0	18.2	
Truck Transportation	9,600	9,500	9,200	1.1	4.3	
<b>Information</b>	11,500	11,500	11,400	0.0	0.9	
Telecommunications	4,700	4,700	4,800	0.0	-2.1	
<b>Financial Activities</b>	32,400	32,200	30,500	0.6	6.2	
Finance & Insurance	23,600	23,400	22,300	0.9	5.8	
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	8,800	8,800	8,200	0.0	7.3	
<b>Professional &amp; Business Services</b>	82,800	83,500	78,000	-0.8	6.2	
Professional, Scientific, & Technical	31,800	31,700	31,200	0.3	1.9	
Scientific Research & Development	7,400	7,300	7,700	1.4	-3.9	
Management of Companies & Enterprises	8,100	8,100	7,700	0.0	5.2	
Administrative & Support & Waste Management	42,900	43,700	39,100	-1.8	9.7	
Administrative & Support Services	41,000	41,500	37,800	-1.2	8.5	
<b>Educational &amp; Health Services</b>	71,600	71,200	69,200	0.6	3.5	
Educational Services	8,700	8,200	8,600	6.1	1.2	
Health Care & Social Assistance	62,900	63,000	60,600	-0.2	3.8	
Hospitals	13,800	13,700	13,200	0.7	4.5	
<b>Leisure &amp; Hospitality</b>	60,800	63,500	56,800	-4.3	7.0	
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	9,400	10,800	7,400	-13.0	27.0	
Accommodation & Food Services	51,400	52,700	49,400	-2.5	4.0	
Accommodation	8,400	8,800	7,900	-4.5	6.3	
Food Services & Drinking Places	43,000	43,900	41,500	-2.1	3.6	
<b>Other Services</b>	19,600	19,800	18,500	-1.0	5.9	
<b>Total Government</b>	118,500	116,300	117,500	1.9	0.9	
Federal Government	12,800	13,500	13,300	-5.2	-3.8	
State & Local Government	105,700	102,800	104,200	2.8	1.4	
State Government	30,800	29,800	29,900	3.4	3.0	
State Government Education	15,000	14,100	14,700	6.4	2.0	
State Government Administration	15,800	15,700	15,200	0.6	3.9	
Local Government	74,900	73,000	74,300	2.6	0.8	
Local Government Education	39,900	37,000	39,000	7.8	2.3	
Local Government Administration	31,800	32,900	32,200	-3.3	-1.2	
Local Government Tribes	3,200	3,100	3,100	3.2	3.2	

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\* Estimates include all full or part time wage and salary workers who worked or received pay in the following industry groups during the pay period ending nearest the 12th of the month.

**State Table 5: Economic Indicators**

	Oct 2006	Sep 2006	Oct 2005	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
IDAHO LABOR FORCE <sup>(1)</sup>					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	757,400	762,800	744,700	-0.7	1.7
Unemployment	23,900	25,500	26,700	-6.3	-10.5
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	3.2	3.3	3.6		
Total Employment	733,500	737,300	718,000	-0.5	2.2
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	759,700	761,500	746,900	-0.2	1.7
Unemployment	19,000	20,500	21,400	-7.3	-11.2
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	2.5	2.7	2.9		
Total Employment	740,700	741,000	725,500	0.0	2.1
U. S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE <sup>(2)</sup>	4.4	4.6	4.9		
U.S. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX <sup>(2)</sup>					
Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers (CPI-W)	197.0	198.4	195.2	-0.7	0.9
All Urban Consumer (CPI-U)	201.8	202.9	199.2	-0.5	1.3
AGRICULTURE					
Agriculture Employment	50,770	49,200	49,500	3.2	2.6
Operators	9,740	9,740	9,740	0.0	0.0
Unpaid Family	360	360	360	0.0	0.0
Hired Workers	40,670	39,100	39,400	4.0	3.2
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE					
<b>Claims Activities</b>					
Initial Claims <sup>(3)</sup>	6,736	3,872	6,477	74.0	4.0
Weeks Claimed <sup>(4)</sup>	31,024	23,860	35,794	30.0	-13.3
<b>Benefit Payment Activities<sup>(5)</sup></b>					
Weeks Compensated	23,152	18,439	22,663	25.6	2.2
Total Benefit \$ Paid	\$4,934,563	\$4,180,758	\$5,119,474	18.0	-3.6
Average Weekly Benefit Amount	\$213.14	\$226.73	\$225.90	-6.0	-5.6
Covered Employers	46,131	48,915	46,131	-5.7	0.0
Total Benefit \$ Paid During Last 12 Months <sup>(4)</sup>	\$112,024,837	\$111,801,739	\$132,524,136	0.2	-15.5
(1) Preliminary Estimate					
(2) Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics					
(3) Includes all entitlements/programs on Intrastate and Interstate Agent, New, and Additional Claims					
(4) Includes all entitlements/programs, Intrastate and Interstate Agent					
(5) Includes all entitlements/programs, Total Liable Activities					



# Panhandle News

BENEWAH, BONNER, BOUNDARY, KOOTENAI & SHOSHONE COUNTIES

## ECONOMIC TRENDS

As autumn leaves fell between September and October, so did Panhandle employment. The Panhandle counties almost always lose jobs between September and October. Agriculture, Forest Service, lawn care, landscaping and other outdoor jobs dry up as weather worsens and summer residents and tourists disappear, curbing retail and service employment. Only two sectors usually add jobs. Education finishes its final hiring in September and October, and construction usually peaks in October as contractors add extra hands to finish projects before the snow flies. The end-of-summer impact on the retail sector depends on how early the stores and national catalog retailer Coldwater Creek add workers for the Christmas season.

This year was a fairly normal September-to-October transition. As Panhandle Table 1 shows, the Coeur d'Alene Metropolitan Statistical Area encompassing all of Kootenai County lost about 140 jobs. Retailers and wholesalers were expecting a good Christmas season, which they got, so they hired extra workers early. Professional and business services lost jobs as landscaping and surveying experienced normal seasonal declines. Natural resources and mining fell as expected with gravel pits and logging companies reducing work. Leisure and hospitality lost 700 jobs as it normally does when summer tourist attractions and golf courses close and hotels and restaurants scale back.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

### Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes

- The Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes, the 79-mile trail along a former Union Pacific railroad bed running between Mullan and Plummer, recently won the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Phoenix Award

Panhandle Table 1: Coeur d'Alene MSA Labor Force & Employment Kootenai County

	Oct 2006*	Sep 2006	Oct 2005	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	69,520	69,590	68,540	-0.1	1.4
Unemployed	2,280	2,390	2,590	-4.6	-12.0
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.3	3.4	3.8		
Total Employment	67,240	67,200	65,950	0.1	2.0
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	69,300	69,880	68,310	-0.8	1.4
Unemployed	1,800	1,870	2,050	-3.7	-12.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.6	2.7	3.0		
Total Employment	67,500	68,010	66,260	-0.7	1.9
<b>JOB BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS</b>	56,520	56,660	53,990	-0.2	4.7
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	11,430	11,500	10,920	-0.6	4.7
Natural Resources & Mining	520	530	480	-1.9	8.3
Construction	6,290	6,280	5,770	0.2	9.0
Manufacturing	4,620	4,690	4,670	-1.5	-1.1
Wood Product Manufacturing	950	970	1,070	-2.1	-11.2
Other Manufacturing	3,670	3,720	3,600	-1.3	1.9
<b>Service-Providing Industries</b>	45,090	45,160	43,070	-0.2	4.7
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	10,170	10,080	9,950	0.9	2.2
Wholesale Trade	1,460	1,440	1,360	1.4	7.4
Retail Trade	7,670	7,600	7,500	0.9	2.3
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	1,040	1,040	1,090	0.0	-4.6
Information	980	980	1,010	0.0	-3.0
Financial Activities	2,930	2,930	2,790	0.0	5.0
Professional & Business Services	6,520	6,580	6,000	-0.9	8.7
Educational & Health Services	5,960	5,670	5,400	5.1	10.4
Leisure & Hospitality	7,250	7,950	7,010	-8.8	3.4
Other Services	1,410	1,440	1,430	-2.1	-1.4
Government Education	3,760	3,430	3,680	9.6	2.2
Government Administration	5,380	5,360	5,100	0.4	5.5
Government Tribes	730	740	700	-1.4	4.3

\* Preliminary estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

as 2006's best brownfields project in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes representatives attending the EPA Boston conference on remediating land that has become contaminated included Old Mission State Park Manager Bill Scudder, who manages the trail from Mullan to Harrison; Gary Honeyman of Union Pacific Railroad; Mike Cooper of MFG, the engineering firm that designed and oversaw the trail's creation and Phil Cernera, representing the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, which manages the trail from Harrison to Plummer.

## Bonner County

- Mountain West Bank, based in Coeur d'Alene, plans to build a financial center that will anchor Westpointe Plaza, a new development in southwest Sandpoint. Mountain West will occupy half of a three-story, 18,388-square-foot building. Other tenants will occupy the rest. Construction on the center, which will feature drive-up windows and an ATM, should be completed by early 2008. The new Mountain West branch, which will include a loan office, will employ six people. Mountain West's two current branches in the Sandpoint area will remain open. The plaza may also include a 30,000-square-foot grocery store and two smaller buildings for retail and service businesses.
- Coldwater Creek, Bonner County's largest private-sector employer and an active supporter of local economic development, recently contributed nearly \$50,000 to North Idaho College's satellite campus at the Bonner Mall in Ponderay. The donation is paying for technology and equipment for the school's new facility.
- Sterling and Cheryl Rink recently opened Cruise-n-Lube in downtown Priest River. They believe customers will find the shop fun and family-oriented as well as efficient. The shop in the newly renovated building offers oil changes, fluid exchanges and wiper blade service.
- Starbucks recently opened a 1,700-square-foot store in the new Ponderay Plaza along U.S. Highway 95 in Ponderay. It employs nearly 20 people and is the second Starbucks in the Sandpoint area.

## Boundary County

- Riley Creek Lumber announced in November that it will not recall the 65 workers it laid off from its Moyie Springs mill on July 24. Riley Creek hoped that lumber prices would rise enough after a couple of months to allow it to recall workers. However, lumber prices fell even lower. The Random Lengths composite price for framing labor per thousand board feet fell 13 percent from \$308 on July 21 to \$269 on Nov. 10. A year before, on Nov. 11, 2005, the price was \$363. Riley Creek permanently laid off another six workers when it made its November announcement. Fortunately, most of the laid-off workers have found employment, and the others are exploring the re-training, educational and career resources provided by Idaho Commerce and Labor's Bonners Ferry office. Nearly 90 people continue to work for Riley Creek in Moyie Springs. Since early 2003, Boundary County wood products employment has fallen from 410 to 250.

- North Idaho College's satellite campus in Bonners Ferry, which opened in September, plans to offer 10 credit classes this spring. County residents are demonstrating a lot of pent-up demand for college courses and professional-technical programs. In addition, some residents are earning the equivalent of a high school degree through the GED program. The Bonners Ferry campus also is accepting high school students for dual enrollment programs, allowing them to earn college credits for classes they take while still in high school. The campus also will custom-design training programs for employees of local businesses.

## Kootenai County

- After years without a bank, Spirit Lake, a town of 1,500 in northwestern Kootenai County, is getting one. Inland Northwest Bank, based in Spokane, plans to open a 2,300-square-foot branch this summer with two drive-up lanes and an ATM just south of Miller's Food City. The bank will employ four people. The nearest bank is in Rathdrum, 12 miles south.
- Ascension Snowboards is relocating to a 4,800-square-foot building in Post Falls, where it began producing customized snowboards this fall and opened a retail store in November. Founder and owner John Minor came up with the idea for Ascension when he noticed how many graphics on snowboards were offensive and inappropriate for kids. Ascension provides alternatives acceptable to both parents and kids. It lets its customers choose the color and graphics for their snowboards. Most customers place their orders on Ascension's Web site. Within days of placing the order, customers receive their customized snowboards. Ascension employs about a dozen people. Minor hopes to produce 14,000 snowboards in 2007 and 30,000 in subsequent years.
- Kootenai Medical Center, the community hospital in Coeur d'Alene, recently installed a \$2.5 million, state-of-the-art computerized tomography scanner so fast that it can make real-time images of a beating heart. Most scanners give less detailed images and require beta-blockers to slow patients' hearts before the scan. The center is only the eighth health institution in the world to install the scanner.
- Jake's Dry Dock Store opened in November in Coeur d'Alene. It sells t-shirts, caps, backpacks and clothing featuring the Life is Good brand.
- Golf Digest/BusinessWeek rated Coeur d'Alene as America's seventh hottest retirement destination for golfers in 2006. The ranking considers the num-



ber of golf courses built or being built since 2000 as well as scenery, weather, culture, health care and other lifestyle variables.

- Lifestream Technologies recently closed in Riverbend Commerce Park in Post Falls. Founded in Sandpoint in 1992, it began manufacturing finger-stick cholesterol-testing devices that provided information within minutes. After moving to Post Falls in 1998, its employment peaked near 40 in early 2001. Fewer than 10 people worked for Lifestream in 2006.
- Bambino's Pizza and Gelato recently opened in Coeur d'Alene. The restaurant serves lunch and dinner and features organic food with an Italian flavor, including pizza, paninis and pasta dishes.

#### Shoshone County

- Sterling Mining Co. is making progress towards re-opening the Sunshine Mine, the most productive silver mine in world history. The mine employed eight people at the beginning of 2006. Currently, 30 employees just completed revitalizing the mine's boilers and steam heating distribution system. For the next few months, the crews are renovating the mine's ore-processing facilities. Sterling expects ore production to start in the fourth quarter of 2007 or the first quarter of 2008.
- Another historic mine may reopen in the next few years. Strategic Nevada Resources Corp., based in Vancouver, British Columbia, paid \$650,000 recently for the Crescent Mine, which closed in 1986. Located between the Sunshine and Bunker Hill mines, the Crescent was acquired by Shoshone County and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency during the bankruptcy of the Bunker Hill Mine in 1991. When deep underground mines like the Crescent close, their enormous pumps are shut off, and the mines fill with water. Because the Crescent is flooded, significant engineering and logistical problems must be resolved before ore production can begin.
- The Lucky Friday Mine near Mullan employs about 200 workers these days and could be the source of more jobs in the future. The mine's owner, Hecla Mining, says it has identified nearly as many ore resources for the future as have been mined in the entire history of the prolific silver and lead mine. Hecla is considering increasing the Lucky Friday's production capacity.
- Shoshone County is one of 12 Idaho communities to receive expert assistance with problems caused by explosive growth. Last winter, the Idaho Legisla-

ture earmarked \$250,000 to create the Rural Idaho Growth Management Technical Assistance Program, under which Idaho Commerce & Labor matches growth and planning experts with community leaders. The experts will help local leaders develop zoning and other ordinances to effectively manage growth. After more than two decades of decline, Shoshone County is experiencing population growth and a construction and real estate boom not seen there since 1915. Managed growth and affordable housing have become major concerns for many county residents.

- At the start of the ski season, Silver Mountain unveiled its newest attraction — a 600-foot-long snow-tubing course called the Prospector Adventure Zone. After tubing down the hill, visitors can use a conveyor lift to return to the top. The conveyor lift is similar to people movers used at many airports. Tubing parks are a new trend in the ski industry, offering entertainment for family members who don't ski or snowboard.
- Mary-Gail Powers opened eMGees on Nov. 3 in Kellogg. The antiques and collectibles shop also sells jewelry, soap, scarves and candles made by local craftspeople. In the spring, Powers plans to offer lawn and garden items. The store will share space with Cut 'n Loose, a hair salon that Nancy Bishop will open in the next month or two.
- Elena Hayes opened A Fair World Shoppe at the Cedar Street Emporium in Wallace after Thanksgiving. The store sells all kinds of items handmade by native people from around the world, ensuring they receive a fair living wage for their work and a fair share of the profits from selling their work.
- Alpine Village Resort broke ground Nov. 10 on a luxury condominium development in Kellogg. The first of the development's four 21-unit buildings is slated for completion by August.

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# North Central Idaho News

CLEARWATER, IDAHO, LATAH, LEWIS & NEZ PERCE COUNTIES

## ECONOMIC TRENDS

October's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate plunged seven-tenths of a point from September to 4.1 percent. Good weather allowed construction and other outdoor work to continue. October typically sees construction, logging and agriculture slow because of rain and cool temperatures. Year-over-year unemployment was also down seven-tenths of a percent from last October's rate of 4.8 percent.

### SPECIAL TOPIC: Canadian Imports and Falling Housing Starts

Eight sawmills in north central Idaho and eastern Washington are operating under some of the most challenging circumstances of the decade. Housing starts are falling, and some industry experts fear a recent compromise with the Canadian government might make it even tougher for U.S. mills to compete.

"We continue to monitor the situation closely," said Potlatch's Matt Van Vleet, but the company has not issued any "curtailment announcements for Idaho sawmills."

Calvin Hogg, chief financial officer at Three Rivers mill near Kooskia, conceded that "prices are not good at all, and we'll have to watch that."

Brett Bennett, vice president of Bennett Lumber Products, said his company is "doing just fine" given the circumstances, but "nobody is very happy where things are. We don't intend to take any downtime as far as we can see in the future unless things start to get worse."

At the root are slowing housing starts, which on an annualized basis dropped from a record 2.2 million in February 2005 to 1.48 million this October. Compounding that is the resolu-

North Central Idaho Table 1: Lewiston MSA Labor Force & Employment  
Nez Perce County, Idaho and Asotin County, Washington

	Oct 2006*	Sep 2006	Oct 2005	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	28,280	28,800	29,160	-1.8	-3.0
Unemployment	1,150	1,390	1,390	-17.3	-17.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.1	4.8	4.8		
Total Employment	27,130	27,410	27,770	-1.0	-2.3
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	28,020	28,170	28,870	-0.5	-2.9
Unemployment	960	1,040	1,160	-7.7	-17.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.4	3.7	4.0		
Total Employment	27,060	27,130	27,710	-0.3	-2.3
<b>JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS</b>					
<i>Goods-Producing Industries</i>	4,470	4,490	4,620	-0.4	-3.2
Natural Resources & Mining	270	280	230	-3.6	17.4
Construction	1,250	1,250	1,400	0.0	-10.7
Manufacturing	2,950	2,960	2,990	-0.3	-1.3
Wood Product Manufacturing	530	540	550	-1.9	-3.6
Food Manufacturing	30	30	30	0.0	0.0
Paper Manufacturing	1,090	1,100	1,110	-0.9	-1.8
Other Manufacturing	1,300	1,290	1,300	0.8	0.0
<i>Service-Providing Industries</i>	22,540	22,450	22,640	0.4	-0.4
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	5,430	5,450	5,440	-0.4	-0.2
Wholesale Trade	650	660	680	-1.5	-4.4
Retail Trade	3,450	3,460	3,480	-0.3	-0.9
Utilities	80	90	90	-11.1	-11.1
Transportation & Warehousing	1,250	1,240	1,190	0.8	5.0
Information	450	450	410	0.0	9.8
Financial Activities	1,830	1,840	1,850	-0.5	-1.1
Professional & Business Services	1,590	1,580	1,730	0.6	-8.1
Education & Health Services	4,490	4,460	4,450	0.7	0.9
Leisure & Hospitality	2,370	2,430	2,510	-2.5	-5.6
Other Services	1,070	1,090	1,120	-1.8	-4.5
Government Education	2,510	2,370	2,300	5.9	9.1
Government Administration	2,050	2,030	2,080	1.0	-1.4
Government Tribes	750	750	750	0.0	0.0

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

tion of a decades-old dispute about softwood lumber between the United States and Canada. In the past, U.S. producers claimed Canada subsidized its lumber industry so wood could be exported at cheaper prices. In response, the United States collected duties on Canadian wood products to even the playing field. As part of a new agreement, Canada will pay the United States \$1 billion. About half will go to American mills. Most of the rest will go to organizations

such as Habitat for Humanity and the American Forest Foundation. But the real kicker is that the United States is giving Canada the \$5 billion it collected in duties on Canadian lumber. With that \$5 billion cash infusion, Canada's mills will have more money to invest in technology, which could give them an advantage again in the very competitive wood market. Mill owners are worried that the agreement with Canada makes the competition even stiffer.

#### The China Connection

A trade magazine ad for a new foundry in China led Ed Endebrock into new relationships that are helping his Hydraulic Warehouse in Lewiston thrive. Endebrock's company manufactures and repairs hydraulic pumps and motors for dump trucks, tunnel borers and even Ferris wheels. It buys components from other manufacturers. Endebrock contacted the Chinese foundry and now it is one of his chief suppliers. He plans to open a location in Anji, China, within the year similar to the one he has in Lewiston.

China's influence on the economy of north central Idaho and southeastern Washington is growing. Some manufacturers, including Hydraulic Warehouse and Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories in Pullman, are finding it to be a new frontier filled with opportunities. China is one of Schweitzer's fastest-growing markets, says Erik Newman, director of sales and customer service for the company. The company, which manufactures relays for electrical transmission, placed its first technical service center in Shanghai in 1998 and since has added three new centers. "There are many opportunities for Schweitzer to help China improve the performance and reliability of its power systems," Newman says.

Potlatch's experience has been the opposite. China has built its own paperboard plants with quality high enough to squeeze out American competitors, says Matt Van Vleet, Potlatch's spokesman in Lewiston. The success Endebrock is having has taken time. He has spent hours socializing with his business partners in China, their wives and children. "It becomes darn near a family relationship with the people you do business with," Endebrock says. "There has to be a large amount of trust." China, including Hong Kong, is the largest foreign consumer of Idaho products. Most of the state's exports to China are high-tech products like semiconductors. But other markets are emerging. The northern portion of China, for example, eats more wheat than rice, and the country does not produce all of the wheat it consumes. There also is a housing boom in China that is fueling a need for wood products.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### Idaho and Lewis Counties

- The Nez Perce National Forest will be moving the supervisor's office in Grangeville across town to a new facility adjacent to the Idaho County Airport. Harold Mildenberger of Hamilton, Mont., was awarded a 15-year fixed lease with a five-year option to construct the new U.S. Forest Service facility. Anticipated occupancy is October 2007. The building will be located south of the Forest Service's Grangeville Air Center and will include office, warehouse and warehouse yard space. In addition to the supervisor's office, the facility will also house employees of the Clearwater Ranger District, the Interagency Dispatch Center, the Bureau of Land Management and NOAA Fisheries.
- Patrons of the 58-year-old Joint School District 241 covering Grangeville, White Bird, Riggins, Kooskia and Elk City have voted to divide the school district. Overall, 69 percent favored deconsolidation. During the next year, the district will be split into Grangeville's Joint School District 244 and the Riggins-area School District 243.

### Latah County

- University of Idaho scientist Jack Brown has been breeding plants for nearly 15 years. Now a foreign, alternative-energy investment company has found him and will pay the professor \$2 million to research oilseed crops for designer fuel oils such as biodiesel. Brown said the people who are making ethanol and biodiesel have traditionally used whatever corn or soy surplus they had, but the crops that are best for food are not always best for biodiesel. The investment company, Eco-Energy Ltd., wants to take Brown's research and add another element — adaptability. Eco-Energy will use the worldwide land holdings of its parent company, Interests Investments, to produce biofuels. Eco-Energy Chief Executive Ian Rosenblatt said he spent the last two years traveling the world, looking for ideas. He discovered Brown's work through a simple Web search that turned up the university's home page and a story on the BioBug, the university's biodiesel Volkswagen. According to Brown, he will direct his research toward increasing the adaptability of his crops to be viable in different climatic and environmental conditions. The funding will support approximately 11 people in Brown's program, including five staff members, three to four graduate students and three to four undergraduate students. Once a successful plant is developed, Eco-Energy will have certain rights to

commercialize the plants in other countries. But in the United States, the university will retain the rights to the new seed varieties, and it will continue to make them available to farmers. Brown has developed environmentally friendly fuel oils that can be used in pristine places like national parks and on farms for more sustainable agriculture. Using 100 percent biodiesel instead of mixing it with fossil fuels retains its biodegradability, which is important in these places, he said.

- The city of Moscow received \$450,000 from the Rural Idaho Initiative in November to install fiber optic lines at the Alturas Technology Park. The fiber optic connectivity will create 16 new jobs and help retain 75 jobs in the city. The city has been working on the fiber optics project over the last three years in cooperation with the Idaho Transportation Department, the Moscow School District, Gritman Medical Center and University of Idaho's National Institute for Advanced Transportation Technology. All will benefit from the installation. In addition, the expanded fiber optics network proposed in the grant would include the Eastside Marketplace.

#### Nez Perce and Asotin, Wash., Counties

- Syringa Bank plans to open its first location outside the Boise metropolitan area in Lewiston before the end of the year. Lewiston rose to the top of the list for expansion partly because Sterling Savings in Spokane acquired FirstBank in Clarkston, said Jerry Aldape, president and chief executive officer of Syringa Bank. Syringa Bank will open a temporary location at Mall 21 in the former Gourmet Way with plans to hire the manager and all other employees from the Lewiston area. Within a year, Syringa Bank hopes to have two permanent locations in Lewiston that will employ 15. The bank's "bread and butter" are commercial loans between \$50,000 and \$4 million. The bank currently employs 66 people statewide.

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#### ON THE WEB



## Idaho's Fringe Benefit Survey

The Idaho Fringe Benefits Survey released late in 2005, assessed the types and frequency of benefits Idaho employers offered their workers. The information gathered from nearly 2,200 randomly selected employers throughout Idaho was analyzed to identify differences in benefit packages based on employer size, public or private ownership, industry, geographic region and rural-urban location. This information can be important to employees and employers alike since benefits can account for a significant portion of overall employee compensation.

The entire survey results are available online at <http://Imi.idaho.gov>. Click on "Publications" on the left menu bar. Highlights are pictured in the box on the right.

### Survey Highlights . . .

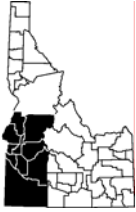
★ **The larger the business, the more likely benefits are offered to its employees.**



★ **Medical insurance is offered at higher rates to employees in the public sector compared to businesses in the private sector.**

★ **The percentage of employers who offer medical insurance is the highest in management of companies at 91 percent. These rates vary down to 48 percent for the accommodation and food services industry.**

★ **In general, urban businesses offer insurance packages at slightly higher rates than those in rural counties.**



# Southwestern Idaho News

ADA, ADAMS, BOISE, CANYON, ELMORE, GEM, OWYHEE, PAYETTE, VALLEY & WASHINGTON COUNTIES

## ECONOMIC TRENDS

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the Boise-Nampa Metropolitan Statistical Area declined for the third straight month in October, falling another one-tenth of a percentage point from September to 2.7 percent, the lowest so far in 2006. The rate was four-tenths of a point lower than the same month a year ago. Both the civilian labor force and total employment declined in October as construction began its annual slowdown and a number of discouraged workers stopped looking for jobs.

Contributing to the lower unemployment picture was a six-tenths of a percentage point increase in nonfarm payroll jobs from September. Another 1,700 new jobs brought the area's total nonfarm jobs to 274,700. That was over 16,000 more than in October 2005, a 6.3 percent increase. Offsetting October declines in construction and in some manufacturing sectors was a surge in state and local public education as the 2006-2007 school year got into full swing. Public education added 1,600 jobs during the month. The October 2006 civilian labor

	Civilian Labor Force	Number Unemployed	Percent Unemployed	Number Employed
Ada	195,959	4,681	2.4	191,278
Adams	2,015	135	6.7	1,880
Boise	4,364	117	2.7	4,248
Canyon	82,016	2,722	3.3	79,294
Elmore	10,823	472	4.4	10,351
Gem	7,523	274	3.6	7,248
Owyhee	5,061	120	2.4	4,941
Payette	10,026	546	5.4	9,480
Valley	5,073	190	3.7	4,883
Washington	4,973	269	5.4	4,703
Statewide	757,440	23,906	3.2	733,534

Southwestern Idaho Table 1: Boise City-Nampa MSA Labor Force & Employment (Ada, Canyon, Boise, Gem and Owyhee counties)

	Oct 2006*	Sep 2006	Oct 2005	% Change Last Month	% Change Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	294,900	297,800	288,800	-1.0	2.1
Unemployment	7,900	8,400	9,100	-6.0	-13.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.7	2.8	3.1		
Total Employment	287,000	289,400	279,700	-0.8	2.6
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	293,300	293,100	287,200	0.1	2.1
Unemployment	6,900	7,300	7,900	-5.5	-12.7
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.4	2.5	2.8		
Total Employment	286,400	285,800	279,300	0.2	2.5
<b>JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	274,700	273,000	258,300	0.6	6.3
GOODS-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES	55,500	55,500	51,800	0.0	7.1
<i>Natural Resources &amp; Construction</i>	24,400	24,500	21,800	-0.4	11.9
Construction	24,000	24,100	21,500	-0.4	11.6
<i>Manufacturing</i>	31,100	31,000	30,000	0.3	3.7
Durable Goods	24,500	24,700	23,700	-0.8	3.4
Wood Product Manufacturing	2,600	2,600	2,300	0.0	13.0
Fabricated Metal Products Mfg.	1,500	1,500	1,500	0.0	0.0
Machinery Manufacturing	1,200	1,200	1,200	0.0	0.0
Computer & Electronic Manufacturing	14,200	14,200	14,000	0.0	1.4
Transportation Equipment Mfg.	2,200	2,200	2,200	0.0	0.0
Other Durable Goods	2,800	3,000	2,500	-6.7	12.0
Nondurable Goods	6,600	6,300	6,300	4.8	4.8
Food Manufacturing	4,500	4,300	4,500	4.7	0.0
Printing & Related Support Activities	700	700	700	0.0	0.0
Other Nondurable Goods	1,400	1,300	1,100	7.7	27.3
SERVICE-PROVIDING INDUSTRIES	219,200	217,500	206,500	0.8	6.2
<i>Trade, Transportation, &amp; Utilities</i>	54,100	54,100	50,000	0.0	8.2
Trade	46,200	46,200	42,800	0.0	7.9
Wholesale Trade	12,600	12,700	11,800	-0.8	6.8
Wholesalers, Durable Goods	7,500	7,500	7,100	0.0	5.6
Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	3,700	3,800	3,600	-2.6	2.8
Retail Trade	33,600	33,500	31,000	0.3	8.4
Food & Beverage Stores	4,500	4,600	4,500	-2.2	0.0
General Merchandise Stores	6,800	6,700	6,200	1.5	9.7
All Other Retail Trade	22,300	22,200	20,300	0.5	9.9
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	7,900	7,900	7,200	0.0	9.7
Utilities	600	600	600	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	7,300	7,300	6,600	0.0	10.6
<i>Information</i>	5,400	5,300	5,400	1.9	0.0
Telecommunications	1,400	1,400	2,400	0.0	-41.7
<i>Financial Activities</i>	14,800	14,800	13,700	0.0	8.0
Finance & Insurance	10,200	10,300	9,600	-1.0	6.3
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	4,600	4,500	4,100	2.2	12.2
<i>Professional &amp; Business Services</i>	39,100	39,000	37,700	0.3	3.7
Professional, Scientific, & Technical	11,300	11,200	10,900	0.9	3.7
Management of Companies & Ent.	5,800	5,900	5,800	-1.7	0.0
Administrative & Support & Waste Mgmt.	22,000	21,900	21,000	0.5	4.8
<i>Educational &amp; Health Services</i>	32,700	32,100	31,400	1.9	4.1
Educational Services	3,200	2,700	2,800	18.5	14.3
Health Care & Social Assistance	29,500	29,400	28,600	0.3	3.1
Hospitals	9,700	9,700	9,200	0.0	5.4
<i>Leisure &amp; Hospitality</i>	23,500	24,000	21,800	-2.1	7.8
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	3,400	3,700	2,700	-8.1	25.9
Accommodation & Food Services	20,100	20,300	19,100	-1.0	5.2
Accommodation	2,100	2,100	2,100	0.0	0.0
Food Services & Drinking Places	18,000	18,200	17,000	-1.1	5.9
<i>Other Services</i>	7,200	7,300	6,200	-1.4	16.1
<b>Total Government</b>	42,400	40,900	40,300	3.7	5.2
Federal Government	5,800	5,900	5,900	-1.7	-1.7
State & Local Government	36,600	35,000	34,400	4.6	6.4
State Government	14,000	13,600	13,600	2.9	2.9
State Government Education	5,000	4,600	4,900	8.7	2.0
State Government Administration	9,000	9,000	8,700	0.0	3.4
Local Government	22,600	21,400	20,800	5.6	8.7
Local Government Education	14,400	13,200	12,800	9.1	12.5
Local Government Administration	8,200	8,200	8,000	0.0	2.5

\* Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

force and total employment figures for all 10 counties in southwestern Idaho are shown in Southwestern Idaho Table 2 on page 13.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### Boise MSA

- According to the latest Wells Fargo Boise Area Cost of Living Report, the cost of living dropped by 0.7 percent in October largely due to declining fuel costs. The cost of transportation was down 3.4 percent while prices for groceries increased by 0.7 percent and clothing costs were up 0.8 percent. Nationwide the Consumer Price Index also declined albeit by a slightly smaller amount of 0.5 percent. That was also mostly due to falling fuel prices.
- Micron and Intel recently announced plans to build a new \$3 billion facility in Singapore, where they will continue their joint venture in manufacturing NAND flash memory. Once complete, the new building will be the fourth manufacturing plant being operated by the partnership and will be the largest NAND manufacturing facility in Singapore. Production is scheduled to start during the second half of 2008.
- Micron has started production of CMOS image sensors about a month ahead of schedule at the former Zilog Building 2 in Nampa with 100 employees. The sensors will be mostly used in digital cameras and in cameras found in most new cellular phones.
- A fourth major retailer recently opened in the Treasure Valley Marketplace in Nampa. Old Navy joins Costco, Target and Bed Bath and Beyond as the first of seven major retailers scheduled to open new stores in the Marketplace.
- Albertson College of Idaho's goal of being recognized as one of the country's top 100 liberal arts colleges got a boost from the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation, which is providing a \$5 million annual grant for the next three years. The money will pay for renovating the college's 80,000-square-foot Boone Science Hall.
- Hyperspace Communications, which owns Nampa-based MPC Computers, has moved its company headquarters to Nampa from Denver, Colo. In an upcoming shareholder vote, the company wants approval to change its name to MPC Corp.
- A new wholesale food distributor will soon be opening in Nampa. Cash & Carry Smart Foodservice is remodeling the former United Furniture Warehouse building for its 53<sup>rd</sup> store. The chain operates in Oregon, Washington and California in addition to Idaho and caters primarily to business customers and non-profit entities.
- Shadow Butte Industrial Park just west of Emmett recently completed the installation of utilities. The park now has water meters, a holding tank for water, revamped gas lines and a sewer system that is hooked up to the Emmett Waste Water Treatment Plant. Officials anticipate paving the roadways in spring 2007 and then beginning to issue building permits.
- Jackson Food Stores based in Meridian has recently acquired Cummings Oil of Oregon and its 100 stores throughout western Oregon. The deal should increase employment at company headquarters. Jackson's is one of the largest privately owned oil distributors in the western United States.
- The former headquarters of Boise Cascade, now under new ownership, has been renamed the Boise Plaza although an agreement with Boise Cascade requires the Boise signage to stay on the building. The new owner, developer Rafanelli and Nahas, is spending \$12 million to install new lighting, fire alarms, sprinklers, motion sensors and to revamp the east entrance. The building is approximately 320,000 square feet and Boise Cascade has leased back roughly 225,000 square feet. In addition to upgrading the building, Rafanelli and Nahas plans to build a 650-space parking garage on the adjacent parking lots at a cost of \$9 million to \$11 million. Construction should begin in 2007.
- Developers of Caldwell's Sky Ranch Business Park, which sits on 300 acres adjacent to the Caldwell Airport, have sold 70 percent of the available lots. Among the buyers are BMC West, which plans to build a lumber yard and millwork facility; Gem State Manufacturing, which plans a new manufactured homes factory and American Custom Coach, which retrofits limousines and other vehicles into armored vehicles and police cars.
- The city of Caldwell recently broke ground for the Franklin Freeway Interchange project. Once completed, the new interchange will increase the traffic capacity of the overpass, and wider on and off ramps will allow better access for businesses locating in the nearby Sky Ranch Business Park.

### Valley County

- McCall Memorial Hospital will be opening a new clinic in Donnelly. No dates have been set but a 1,500-square-foot office has been leased in the West Roseberry Plaza. A third-party contractor will operate the facility. Payette Lakes Medical Clinic will provide a doctor, receptionist and assistant for the new clinic.

- Lodging revenues in Valley County from January to October are over 21 percent higher than during the same time in 2005. Lodging includes hotel and motel rooms and private campground spaces. Over the summer, lodging revenues were up by more than 19.5 percent from a year ago. That compared to a statewide increase of 9.5 percent.
- Valley County recently agreed to contribute \$112,000 to the Valley Adams Regional Housing Authority to cover its operating costs. The city of McCall was the first to contribute money, giving the housing authority \$75,000. The housing authority fosters agreements between developers and municipalities on affordable housing, draws up minimum standards for affordable housing, matches residents with available housing units and ensures compliance of housing rules.

#### Elmore County

- The first phase of the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's changes for Mountain Home Air Force Base has occurred. Five F-16 planes recently left the base and the remaining F-16s will be gone by March. The base will be receiving 18 F-15Es by June.
- As the city of Mountain Home continues to grow, so do the national retailers in the city. The latest is Maurices, which recently opened in a new shopping complex just across from Wal-Mart.
- Funding for the next phase of new military housing at Mountain Home Air Force Base was recently approved by the U.S. Senate. The base should receive \$108 million to replace 457 housing units, some of them over 50 years old.

#### Adams County

- The Forest Service will get over \$1 million from selling four of five timber salvage contracts in the area near Bear, where a tornado blew down 5,000 acres of trees over a 12 mile swath in June. The unsold contract required expensive helicopter retrieval.
- The Adams County Health Center lost part of its funding in the recent election when the voters dissolved the Council Hospital Taxing District. Despite the loss of funding, the Health Center will remain open as new sources of funds are explored.

#### Washington County

- Fry Foods Inc. of Tiffin, Ohio, has recently located in the former Appleton Produce and Jon-Lin Foods facility in Weiser. Fry Foods processes onions and makes a variety of breaded appetizers similar to Jon-Lin. Fry Foods has one production line in operation.
- During the most recent election, the Weiser Memorial Hospital was successful in convincing voters to approve a long-term debt plan to keep the hospital solvent. The plan converts the hospital's line of credit to a long-term loan that will carry with it tax advantages. Weiser Memorial Hospital has been making a healthy profit in the fiscal year that began in July.

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#### ON THE WEB



### *INCREASING IDAHO'S MINIMUM WAGE*

Idaho Commerce & Labor researchers have updated a 2005 study of the minimum wage in Idaho to show the economic impact various increases would have.

The new analysis does not draw any conclusions or make any recommendations about various proposals being discussed to raise the minimum wage. It only estimates the number of Idaho jobs in 2005

paying within the designated wage ranges and the cost to Idaho employers if the wages for these jobs were increased to a higher level. The employer cost estimate also assumes that no jobs are being compensated at less than the legally mandated minimum wage. To read the entire study, log onto <http://lmi.idaho.gov> and scroll down the page to "Increasing Idaho's Minimum Wage."





# South Central Idaho News

BLAINE, CAMAS, CASSIA, GOODING, JEROME, LINCOLN, MINIDOKA & TWIN FALLS COUNTIES

## ECONOMIC TRENDS

Fortune continues to smile on the Twin Falls-Jerome Micropolitan Statistical Area. Its unemployment rate fell from 3.3 percent in October 2005 to 2.9 percent in October 2006. In the same period, nonfarm payroll jobs grew a strong 4 percent with job gains in almost every industrial sector.

Construction was the largest source of new jobs, adding 450 of the 1,540 new nonfarm payroll jobs. Although residential construction is starting to weaken, commercial construction has picked up the slack. The change in the housing market has resulted in a slight slowdown in real estate activity, which caused the 30-job reduction in the financial sector. Retail trade was the next largest source of new jobs, adding 390 jobs. Rising incomes and a growing population have created strong retail demand. The area continues to benefit from out-of-state businesses moving in or opening new operations. Entering 2007, the area has much to look forward to as it continues to reap the benefits of economic growth and diversification.

South Central Idaho Table 1: Twin Falls-Jerome MicSA Labor Force & Employment—Twin Falls and Jerome counties

	Oct 2006*	Sep 2006	Oct 2005	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<b><i>Seasonally Adjusted</i></b>					
Civilian Labor Force	50,130	51,040	47,010	-1.8	6.6
Unemployment	1,440	1,550	1,550	-7.1	-7.1
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.9	3.0	3.3		
Total Employment	48,690	49,490	45,460	-1.6	7.1
<b><i>Unadjusted</i></b>					
Civilian Labor Force	50,590	51,710	47,440	-2.2	6.6
Unemployment	1,160	1,250	1,250	-7.2	-7.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.3	2.4	2.6		
Total Employment	49,430	50,460	46,190	-2.0	7.0
<b>JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**</b>	40,420	40,110	38,620	0.8	4.7
<b><i>Goods-Providing Industries</i></b>	7,380	7,240	6,980	1.9	5.7
Natural Resources & Mining	40	40	30	0.0	33.3
Construction	2,530	2,560	2,070	-1.2	22.2
Manufacturing	4,810	4,640	4,880	3.7	-1.4
Food Manufacturing	2,620	2,420	2,940	8.3	-10.9
Other Manufacturing	2,190	2,220	1,940	-1.4	12.9
<b><i>Service-Providing Industries</i></b>	33,040	32,870	31,640	0.5	4.4
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	10,270	10,170	9,670	1.0	6.2
Wholesale Trade	1,880	1,960	1,800	-4.1	4.4
Retail Trade	5,960	5,830	5,580	2.2	6.8
Utilities	170	170	160	0.0	6.3
Transportation & Warehousing	2,260	2,210	2,130	2.3	6.1
Information	600	610	600	-1.6	0.0
Financial Activities	1,660	1,770	1,710	-6.2	-2.9
Professional & Business Services	5,030	5,120	4,950	-1.8	1.6
Educational & Health Services	3,520	3,600	3,380	-2.2	4.1
Leisure & Hospitality	3,230	3,430	2,980	-5.8	8.4
Other Services	1,430	1,480	1,370	-3.4	4.4
Government Education	3,310	2,640	3,240	25.4	2.2
Government Administration	3,990	4,050	3,740	-1.5	6.7

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month





# Southeastern Idaho News

BANNOCK, BEAR LAKE, BINGHAM, CARIBOU, FRANKLIN, ONEIDA & POWER COUNTIES

## ECONOMIC TRENDS

Several factors combined to keep the unemployment rate in the Pocatello Metropolitan Statistical Area a low 3.4 percent through October. Good weather allowed large construction projects to continue without interruption and smaller contractors to start new projects. Highway and road construction continued throughout the month, and many projects progressed further than originally anticipated. The good weather also kept demand high for construction workers throughout the harvest season, and many farmers were required to pay higher wages to get qualified workers.

In addition to many construction jobs, there was a high demand for skilled labor at large oil drilling and exploration companies across the Idaho border in Wyoming and Utah. When the price of oil was more than \$80 per barrel, it seemed these jobs would be permanent, but with the recent drop to \$60 per barrel, exploration work may be scaled back, although some oil exploration permits have been issued in the Montpelier area.

There were still plenty of workers to meet the high demand. Several retail stores opened in the area, and all were able to adequately meet their staffing needs.

## SPECIAL TOPIC: Economic Multiplier

The concept of an economic multiplier effect seems to be well known but not well understood. Many individuals confuse the multiplier with dollar turnover. Turnover is the number of times dollars exchange hands once they are received from outside the local economy. A multiplier estimates the ripple effect of an economic event in a defined area. The ripple effect occurs because of the interdependence of economic units in the area. The effect is most often measured at the state, regional or county level. Events that result in a positive multiplier might be the addition or expansion of a

Southeastern Idaho Table 1: Pocatello MSA Labor Force & Employment Bannock and Power counties

	Oct 2006*	Sep 2006	Oct 2005	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	45,630	46,180	44,530	-1.2	2.5
Unemployment	1,560	1,700	1,570	-8.2	-0.6
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.4	3.7	3.5		
Total Employment	44,070	44,480	42,960	-0.9	2.6
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	45,950	45,570	44,880	0.8	2.4
Unemployment	1,310	1,400	1,330	-6.4	-1.5
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.9	3.1	3.0		
Total Employment	44,640	44,170	43,550	1.1	2.5
<b>JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS</b>	40,800	40,480	39,440	0.8	3.4
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	6,200	6,160	5,780	0.6	7.3
Natural Resources & Mining	30	30	30	0.0	0.0
Construction	2,760	2,740	2,380	0.7	16.0
Manufacturing	3,410	3,390	3,370	0.6	1.2
Food Manufacturing	1,130	1,120	990	0.9	14.1
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	170	170	150	0.0	13.3
Machinery Manufacturing	210	220	110	-4.5	90.9
Other Manufacturing	1,900	1,880	2,120	1.1	-10.4
<b>Service-Providing Industries</b>	34,610	34,320	33,660	0.8	2.8
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	7,730	7,650	7,460	1.0	3.6
Wholesale Trade	1,400	1,390	1,330	0.7	5.3
Retail Trade	4,840	4,780	4,640	1.3	4.3
Utilities	40	40	40	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	1,450	1,440	1,450	0.7	0.0
Information	770	760	740	1.3	4.1
Financial Activities	2,180	2,160	2,090	0.9	4.3
Professional & Business Services	5,310	5,180	4,860	2.5	9.3
Educational & Health Services	3,480	3,470	3,380	0.3	3.0
Leisure & Hospitality	3,270	3,430	3,410	-4.7	-4.1
Other Services	1,220	1,220	1,190	0.0	2.5
Government Education	6,100	5,750	6,100	6.1	0.0
Government Administration	4,560	4,700	4,430	-3.0	2.9

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

business or the occurrence of a spectator-related event, such as a major sports game or musical performance, which would attract additional people to an area. Every dollar spent by an outside source can be spent over and over again. But that does not mean multipliers will always be large because the dollars available for spending become fewer after each round of spending. This phenomenon is called "leakage." The three primary forms of leakage are savings, taxes and spending outside the local economy. For example, if there is a leakage of 25 percent between the initial expenditure and the first round of respending, only 75 percent of the original amount will be respent. The next round would drop to

56.25 percent – 75 percent of 75 percent. The higher the leakage, the lower the multiplier effect. In this example, a leakage of 40 percent would result in a multiplier of only 60 percent.

There are three general types of multipliers. Total output multipliers compute the total impact of a change in demand. Earnings multipliers measure impact on income and employment as a result of demands placed on a particular region. Employment multipliers calculate the total number of jobs created by final changes in demand. Of the three, the earning multiplier is the most suitable for estimating economic impacts of a particular business activity.

Several factors are taken into consideration in determining the size of multipliers for an area. Generally, the smaller the area being evaluated the smaller the multiplier. This is because people living in smaller areas have to purchase more items outside their economic area because they are not available locally. Events involving higher wages generally have higher multipliers because there is an increase in disposable income. Industries that derive most of their revenue outside of the region will have a higher multiplier because additional money is brought into the producing region.

It is unwise to generalize about multiplier effects because multipliers vary from industry to industry and area to area. For example, in Arkansas poultry and egg processing plants have an output multiplier of 2.4 while the canned fruit and vegetable industry has a multiplier of 1.7. In Kootenai County, Idaho, production of portable buildings has a multiplier of 2.4 and restaurants have a multiplier of 1.2. If a person used an average multiplier of 2.0, the impact of a restaurant in Kootenai county and canned fruit and vegetable processing plant in Arkansas would be overstated. The impact of manufacturing portable buildings in Kootenai County and the poultry/egg processing plants in Arkansas would be understated.

Because of the differences region to region, multipliers provide estimates of economic impacts, not exact measurements of change. Multiplier numbers change over time because of changes in such things as buying habits, technology and regional market relationships. When evaluating such impacts it is important to get the most recent multiplier available.

The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis is the source for a multiplier most often used by Idaho Commerce & Labor economists. The system is called Regional Input/Output Multipliers and is based on an accounting system using input purchased and output sold for each industry in a region. The system is used as part of economic modeling and forecasting by regional economists throughout the state.

## AREA DEVELOPMENTS

### Bannock County

- The bridge replacement over Interstate 15 was completed in late November, marking completion of the first phase of a two-year \$5.77 million Idaho Department of Transportation construction project. The second phase, starting in the spring, will be replacing the southbound bridge. Construction and other new business activity have continued in Bannock County. Both residential and commercial builders were busy through November, and the Pocatello office of Idaho Commerce & Labor has several job listings for construction workers.
- Local sports enthusiasts are celebrating the opening of Sportsman's Warehouse in the new Pocatello Square Shopping Center. It joins Bed Bath and Beyond, Staples, Famous Footwear, Ross Dress for Less, Mediterranean Sun, Edge Wireless, The Diamond Gallery, Money Tree, Del Taco, D.L. Evans Bank and Aarons.
- Local gourmands also have much to cheer about with the opening of Sanju's Dhaba, featuring Indian fare of curry chicken, dal, papad and rita. For those who prefer more traditional choices, construction is slated to begin within the next year on Chili's and Texas Roadhouse restaurants. Construction of Gold's Gym will also begin soon in the Rail Crossing shopping area. The new eateries will serve not only local residents but also visitors to Pocatello, who will be attending such events as the Big Sky Conference Soccer Championships; the Rocky Mountain Cross Country Championships, which attracted nearly 1,000 runners this fall, and the Pocatello Marathon. These events will be in addition to the many other high school and collegiate activities scheduled throughout each fall.
- A \$910,000 facility upgrade at Lava Hot Springs was completed in time for the traditional Veterans Day tribute when all veterans are invited to enjoy a day at the hot baths. The 45-year-old locker rooms were replaced, room was made for additional pools and operating costs were lowered. The nearly 3 million gallons of mineral water in the soaking pools range from 102 to 112 degrees and are believed to assist in lessening the effects of body pains as well as soothing the soul.
- Union Pacific Railroad announced it intends to hire 100 workers in the Pocatello area in 2007. Approximately 40 of these workers will be in new positions and approximately 60 will be replacing workers lost through attrition.

- Continued growth is anticipated in the area because of solid planning and cooperation among area leaders. Two examples are the success of tax incentive financing districts and support for establishing a foreign trade zone. The Pocatello Development Authority, which administers the tax incentive financing districts, recently published research results validating the districts' positive economic impact in terms of additional jobs and increased tax base for the area. If granted, the foreign trade zone will give manufacturing companies the ability to defer payment of a duty until the end product is sent to commerce. It will also allow companies that import raw product and ship finished goods overseas to bypass duties entirely.
- Pocatello city leaders and airport manager Len Nelson are working together to make flying from the Pocatello airport price and schedule competitive with flights originating from Salt Lake City. The general plan is to negotiate direct flights to Los Angeles or San Francisco for no more than \$100 higher than flights originating in Salt Lake City. Improvements planned at the airport in the next 18 months include a new waiting area with boarding bridges and improved parking.

#### **Franklin and Bear Lake Counties**

- The city of Preston is continuing to upgrade its water system despite a \$1.4 million shortfall caused by unforeseen cost overruns. The upgrade includes installation of water meters, construction of a new two million gallon water storage tank and looping the city with a 10-inch distribution line to equalize delivery pressure. The storage tank should be completed this winter, and the total project will be completed next summer.
- An application for a 63-lot subdivision in the Linrose area received preliminary approval from the Franklin County Planning and Zoning Commission. The lots will range in size from five to nearly 30 acres, and it is anticipated the project will be completed in four or five phases.
- Downtown Preston's Grand Theater and Cultural Arts Center, sometimes referred to as the Worm Creek Opera House, was given a new lease on life when county commissioners voted to take the building off the auction block. The decision gives the Theater Arts Council time to raise funds to make needed repairs.
- The Franklin County Medical Center's Board of Trustees voted to build a new hospital near Whitney. Work could begin by the end of 2008. Generous donations of land and money from local residents appear to have made the dream of building a new hos-

pital and a nursing home a reality in the near future. The current hospital is 75 years old. Its location in the center of town makes upgrading and expansion cost prohibitive.

- Richard Westerberg, Four County Economical Development director, was elected county commissioner and submitted his resignations from the development board as well as from the Preston School Board.

#### **Power and Bingham Counties**

- Agriculture is the usual economic focus of the economy in Power and Bingham counties each fall, and this year is no exception. Their economies will likely benefit from the combination of generally high commodity prices and good production yields. For most sugar beet producers it is shaping up to be a good year. The misfortunes of sugar producers in the area of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma resulted in a smaller sugar crop nationally so Idaho producers were able to get higher prices as the demand for sugar remained strong. The average yield for sugar beets was 31 tons per acre. Sugar content was running about 16.5 percent. The commodity exchange indicates price per pound should be in the 19 to 20-cent range next year.
- The grain harvest was completed a couple of months earlier this fall and had good yields across the board. Prices are higher than they have been in several years. Winter wheat is above \$4.50 a bushel, spring wheat is above \$4.75 a bushel, and barley is very strong at more than \$6.85 a bushel.
- Potato yields were also strong, averaging 371 hundred-pound sacks per acre across the state. Prices remain in the \$6 to \$7 per hundred weight range, depending on quality. The state produced 121.8 million hundred weight compared to 118 million hundred weight last year. However, heavy early demand is expected to reduce inventories to about the same level as the end of last year. The early reduction in inventory is expected to keep the prices up as next spring's planting season begins.
- The long-awaited outpatient dialysis center at Bingham Memorial Hospital celebrated its grand opening Nov. 28. The facility partners with Idaho Kidney Center, which also is located in the hospital. The relationship is helpful for dialysis patients who can tap into the services of specialists without the need to travel.
- The small community of Rockland can claim to be the location of what is believed to be the first home in southeastern Idaho wired with fiber optic cable. The log home is being built by Brigham Griffin, marketing director of Direct Communications. Fiber optics is the future of communications, and copper is

predicted to soon be surpassed on the bandwidth people need. The amount of information that can be carried over fiber optic cable is so large that an individual home could broadcast data equivalent to a television station.

- Rockland citizens are currently working together to raise money to complete the high school gymnasium. This month the community sponsored a large dinner and auction and took a big step toward raising the money needed for upgrading the facility. It is hoped that by this time next year funds will be available for most of the desired upgrades.
- The Rockland Rural Fire District is considering annexing additional land into the district, which would reduce homeowner insurance and give protection to homes and property not currently covered. An annexation election could be held in February.
- Power County Comprehensive Planning Committee discovered area residents see the need for a new restaurant, the blending of building zones, protection of rural areas from urban growth, expansion and renovation of Harms Memorial Hospital, assisted living and nursing homes, growth in downtown American Falls and the need for new industrial businesses. Residents also said they welcomed more involvement from the county's minority population and more cooperation between governmental agencies.
- Power County commissioners are using mediation to resolve a dispute between local residents over a proposed cattle feedlot near American Falls. In August the county's planning and zoning commission approved a special use permit for an operation large enough to raise 1,500 calves. The decision was appealed by local residents who feel the economic gain from a feeding operation close to the city is more than offset by reduced land values and less development of business in the city because of odors produced by the operation.

#### Caribou and Bear Lake Counties

- Caribou County is home to some businesses nationally recognized for their quality work force. In November,

Monsanto was recognized for its outstanding reclamation work. In December, the employees of Degerstrom Ventures were recognized for their safety record. The 77 employees of the company's Enoch and South Rass mines worked 129,778 man-hours without a lost-time injury. This is a remarkable record in the industry, and the company was recognized as the best in the West and second best in the entire nation.

- A committee will determine the feasibility of consolidating Grace School District 148 and Soda Springs School District 150. Decreasing enrollments, increasing costs, aging facilities and the proximity to one another are the reasons for considering consolidation. The committee includes superintendents, board members and community members from Grace and Soda Springs. Idaho law requires that a nine-step plan be presented to each school board before public hearings are held. The last consolidation of school districts in Idaho was 1990.
- Soda Springs and Caribou County residents are generally positive about their communities and feel the variety of outdoor activities, low crime rate, quality youth sports programs and good schools are the best things about living in the area, according to a survey this summer conducted by Partners for Prosperity. The most suggested improvement was for more economic development and job opportunities.
- An area just north of the Montpelier city limits was approved as an industrial zone. City Engineer Jason Linford was asked to look into the possibility of getting a Community Development Block Grant to pay for water line installation into areas where affordable housing is being developed.

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#### WEB SITE PACKED WITH LABOR MARKET RESOURCES

Idaho's Labor Market Information Web site — <http://lmi.idaho.gov> — is a key source for economic information about Idaho and how it compares to the U.S. on a variety of topics. The Web site has proven essential to businesses, students, job seekers, economic analysts and others. Find out for yourself.





# East Central Idaho News

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON & TETON COUNTIES

## ECONOMIC TRENDS

The unemployment rate of the Idaho Falls Metropolitan Statistical Area increased one-tenth of a percentage point to 2.4 percent in October. The labor force grew by 690 as the education sector expanded to accommodate schools in full session. Tourism-related jobs decreased due to seasonal slowdowns along with agricultural and harvest-related jobs resulting in an increase of 70 in the number of people seeking work. Construction employment saw only a small dip since weather remained favorable. Unemployment in Idaho Falls, the largest city in the area, increased to a 2.6 percent, up a tenth of a point from the previous month and down two-tenths of a percentage point from the same time last year.

## SPECIAL TOPIC: Creativity in a Tight Economy

Low unemployment and a tight labor market have given rise to more and more "Now Hiring" signs posted throughout east central Idaho businesses. Starting wages for fast food workers are even being advertised on signs along major roads. With a 2.9 percent unemployment rate, the nine-county area is considered fully employed, meaning, theoretically, everyone who wants a job has one. While turnover continues as workers change jobs, get fired, retire or move from the area, employers are finding a shrinking applicant pool.

A low unemployment rate paired with a growing demand for workers puts a strain on the traditional methods of attracting and retaining a work force. So employers have to get creative and find unique marketing strategies to attract new workers and keep their current ones. Higher starting wages and more generous benefits are some of the more obvious tactics. In Idaho Falls, fast food

East Central Idaho Table 1: Idaho Falls MSA Labor Force & Employment  
Bonneville and Jefferson counties

	Oct 2006*	Sep 2006	Oct 2005	% Change From Last Month	Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	61,630	60,940	60,540	1.1	1.8
Unemployment	1,500	1,430	1,600	4.9	-6.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.4	2.3	2.6		
Total Employment	60,130	59,520	58,930	1.0	2.0
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	61,870	61,570	60,790	0.5	1.8
Unemployment	1,220	1,420	1,310	-14.1	-6.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.0	2.3	2.2		
Total Employment	60,640	60,150	59,480	0.8	2.0
<b>JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS</b>	54,740	54,900	53,170	-0.3	3.0
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	7,830	7,810	7,480	0.3	4.7
Natural Resources & Mining	10	10	70	0.0	-85.7
Construction	4,500	4,520	4,060	-0.4	10.8
Manufacturing	3,320	3,280	3,350	1.2	-0.9
Food Manufacturing	980	920	1,030	6.5	-4.9
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	260	260	250	0.0	4.0
Machinery Manufacturing	160	170	160	-5.7	0.2
Other Manufacturing	1,920	1,930	1,910	-0.5	0.5
<b>Service-Providing Industries</b>	46,910	46,090	45,690	1.8	2.7
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	13,640	13,610	13,070	0.2	4.4
Wholesale Trade	4,300	4,270	4,090	0.7	5.1
Retail Trade	7,600	7,600	7,360	0.0	3.3
Utilities	60	60	60	0.0	0.0
Transportation	1,680	1,680	1,560	0.0	7.7
Information	1,180	1,200	1,170	-1.7	0.9
Financial Activities	2,120	2,120	2,110	0.0	0.5
Professional & Business Services	9,380	9,640	9,200	-2.7	2.0
Educational & Health Services	7,140	7,150	6,800	-0.1	5.0
Leisure & Hospitality	4,350	4,580	4,450	-5.0	-2.2
Other Services	1,990	1,990	2,050	0.0	-2.9
Government Education	3,470	3,160	3,520	9.8	-1.4
Government Administration	3,640	3,640	3,320	0.0	9.6

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

restaurants paying \$7 an hour to start was almost unheard of until this year. Many times a worker accepts a job primarily because of benefits, which may keep the employee loyal as long as the benefits are not reduced.

Some employers buy into the concept that creating a healthy and positive work environment is a major draw to good applicants. A recent Idaho Falls Post Register article featured Larry Walters, manager of the city's Qwest call center. He is credited with improving the call cen-

ter's national sales ranking from last to first in two years while the work force increased from 65 to 500. Walters is also featured in The Gallup Organization's book "12: The Elements of Great Managing," that asserts Walters' management style was instrumental in attracting and retaining employees. Walters' philosophy is summed up in three points.

- Listen to the employees. If employees aren't doing well personally, they can't do well at work.
- Make work fun. Walters offers various activities and events that give the employees something to look forward to and help them bond as a team.
- Take the work personally. The environment he creates helps the employees want to be number one. Sales or quotas reached are posted everywhere so employees can be proud of what they achieved.

Creative recruiting sometimes includes changing the management, not just the management style. Some management types are not equipped to take the company to the next level. They may have worked well to start up but do not know how to handle change and growth, two things that usually go together. Outsourcing support departments such as human resources is not uncommon. The practice has become more prevalent in eastern Idaho in human resources and other areas such as collections and payroll. It helps control the

physical space a company occupies as it grows. Offering flexible work schedules or work-at-home options may attract more applicants in a tight labor market. Several eastern Idaho companies offer some workers home-based employment.

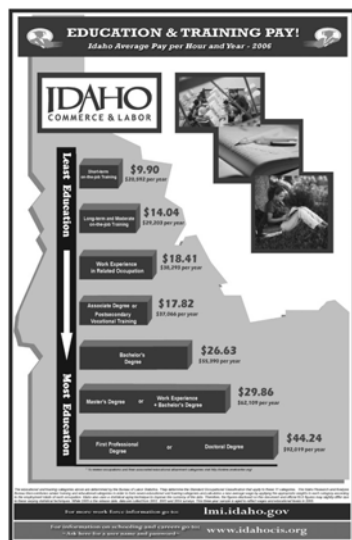
Older workers, typically once retired, are becoming an increasing boon to low unemployment areas. Many have years of experience and knowledge to contribute to a company and its employees.

Some businesses have found that the traditional "fill out an application" method may not be the best way to find new employees in a tight labor market. They are trying to hire repeat and loyal customers, or they are asking trusted colleagues for leads on potential applicants.

Some businesses print want ads on cash register receipts. Still others offer employee discounts to entice applicants or provide cash bonuses to current employees who make referrals that result in a hire. Such creativity and imagination is important if a business wants to stay on top of the competition.

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## Education & Training Pay Poster Available

Posters comparing level of pay with level of training are available free from Idaho Commerce & Labor. An 8 1/2" x 11" size can be downloaded and printed from the Web site in PDF format. Just log onto <http://imi.idaho.gov> and scroll down the home page until you see the poster (pictured on the left) in color. Follow the information on-screen to print the poster.

A larger size, 11" x 17", is also available upon request. The posters have been popular with schools and other career counseling agencies. Log on to the Web site for more information.

## RECESSION TRIGGERS SHIFT IN UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT RECIPIENTS

Five years ago when then-Gov. Dirk Kempthorne cut \$55 million from the state budget to cope with the fallout from the national recession, the Idaho economy was beginning a 12-month run in which it lost nonfarm jobs for the first time since 1986, the final throes of that near-depression.

From November 2001 through October 2002, nonfarm payrolls dropped from over 568,000 to under 567,000. Over 45,000 workers were unemployed as 2002 began, and the unemployment rate hit 6.7 percent.

Today, nonfarm payrolls are nearly 654,000, a 15 percent increase that means 85,000 more jobs across the state. The number of people out of work is barely half what it was five years ago, and the unemployment rate at 3.3 percent is less than half.

As the economy was diversifying and responding to the pressure of population growth, the ranks of the unemployed plummeted across the state, and their faces were changing.

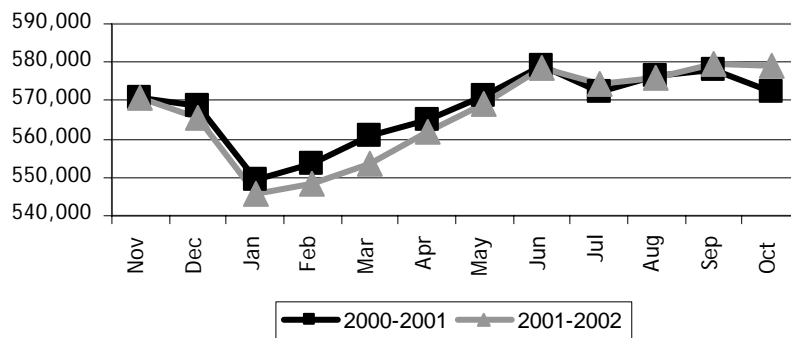
In the four years since the economy began rebounding in 2003, women are making up a greater proportion of unemployment benefit claimants during the summer and fall, and a larger share of the claimants now are over 44 years old. There is also a smaller percentage who lost jobs in retailing and manufacturing.

Since 2003, the number of benefit claimants has dropped by 45 percent to 55 percent during the spring, summer and fall and by around 30 percent during the winter months. The volatility among men remains. Four years ago and today, they account for around 70 percent of the claimants during the winter and early spring when weather and ground conditions limit logging, construction and other outdoor jobs.

But during the summer and fall, males make up less than half the claimants now. Four years ago, they accounted for 55 percent to 65 percent. Demand in seasonal work

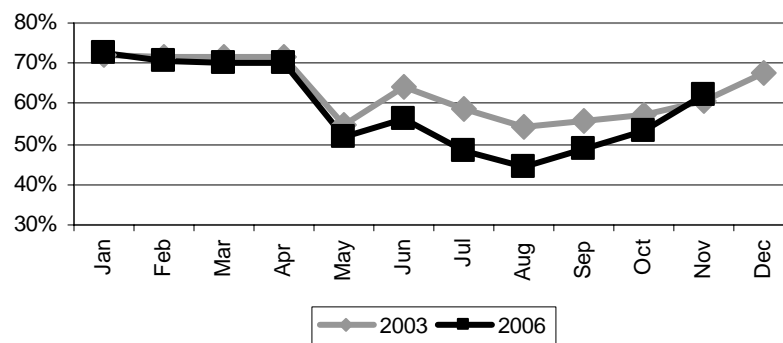
### Monthly Nonfarm Jobs

2000-2001 and 2001-2002



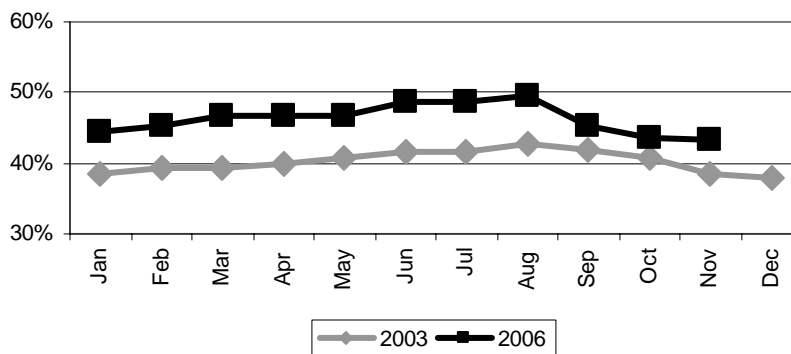
### Percentage of Men as UI Claimants

2003 and 2006



### Percentage of UI Claimants Over 44

2003 and 2006



like construction to accommodate economic and population growth is a likely reason.

The number of female benefit claimants, on the other hand, has been much more stable through the post-recession years. The monthly range in 2003 was 5,400 to 7,900. This year it has been 2,800 to 5,300.

By comparison, male claimants ranged from 6,700 to 19,300 in 2003 and from 2,700 to 13,800 this year.

The age of claimants has also crept up. Four years ago, people over 44 made up about 40 percent of those receiving benefits. This year the proportion has averaged about six percentage points higher each month, possibly the result of younger people foregoing post-secondary training because the job market is so strong.

The sectors producing the unemployed indicate to some extent how the Idaho economy has evolved since the national recession, and the statistics in recent months may be an early signal that the economy is shifting out of overdrive and back to a more sustainable pace of growth.

A wave of new manufacturers has been washing across Idaho along with a migration from other states at one of the highest rates in the nation.

Four years ago, one in every five unemployment benefit claimants was a worker from the manufacturing sector. There were over 3,500 a month on average in 2003 and more than 4,700 that March.

Today, unemployed manufacturing workers claim less than 14 percent on average of the monthly benefit checks, and their numbers have averaged under 1,400 so far in 2006. They dipped as low as 740 in September.

No other sector has recorded such a precipitous decline in benefit claimants as companies like the trailer makers in south central Idaho, paper bag maker Hilex Poly in Jerome, internationally known Buck Knives in Post Falls, Gossner Cheese in Heyburn and Marathon Cheese in Mountain Home – to name just a few – have located in Idaho. They joined the high-tech companies in providing better paying jobs and further diversifying and stabilizing the manufacturing sector beyond food processing and timber mills.

The state has picked up nearly 4,000 manufacturing jobs since 2003, a 6.2 percent increase while the nation as a whole saw manufacturing jobs decline over 1 percent.

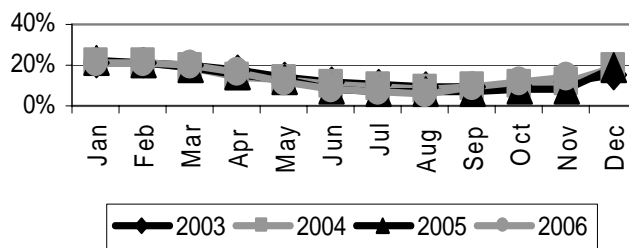
In that same period, Idaho's population grew more than 6 percent, the fourth fastest rate in the nation and twice as fast as the United States overall. Tens of

**FYI Table 1: Percentage of UI Claimants in November by Industry Sector**

Sector	2003	2004	2005	2006
Construction	11.70%	11.20%	8.80%	14.70%
Manufacturing	16.60%	13.60%	14.20%	13.10%
Retail Trade	9.40%	9.10%	8.50%	8.10%
Average for Other Sectors	2.90%	3.10%	3.20%	3.00%

Source: Idaho Commerce & Labor

**Percentage of UI Claimants in Construction 2003-2006**



**FYI Table 2: Monthly Percentage of UI Claimants in Construction**

	2003	2004	2005	2006
January	21.2	21	22.1	21.2
February	21.2	21.6	21.2	21.3
March	19.6	18.4	19	19.9
April	18	14.5	15.7	16.2
May	13.9	12.4	13.4	11.9
June	11.5	10.6	8.8	8
July	10.2	9.1	7.5	6.9
August	9	7.7	6.6	6.4
September	10	9.2	7.5	9.6
October	9.6	10.2	7.9	11.8
November	11.7	11.2	8.8	14.7
December	15.8	18.3	18.7	N/A

Source: Idaho Commerce & Labor

thousands of new residents intensified demand for goods and services, and retailers responded.

The onslaught of major chains like Wal-Mart, Home Depot, Lowe's and others has added over 8,000 new retail jobs across the state, an increase of more than 11 percent when nationally retail jobs are up just 2.1 percent.

Out of work retail employees made up over 9 percent of benefit claimants in 2003. They averaged over 1,700 a month. By comparison today, retail workers claim about 8 percent of the benefit checks and average barely 800 a month.

Unemployment in key service sectors had traditionally been low. While the number of benefit claim-



ants in those sectors declined as the economy strengthened, it remains just a fraction of claimants overall just as it was in 2003.

The economic expansion and population growth fueled a major construction boom, especially in the urban areas of Idaho. Over 17,000 new construction jobs have been generated since 2003, an increase of more than 44 percent compared to the national increase of less than 10 percent.

The construction sector followed the seasonal pattern through the post recession years, running around 20 percent of the claimants during winter and early spring to below 10 percent during late summer and fall. But on average unemployed construction workers accounted for about 14 percent of benefit claimants except in 2005, when the average slipped to just over 13 percent.

The year-to-year monthly comparison also shows that after steadily declining during the summer and fall months from 2003 through 2005, the percentage of

construction workers as benefit claimants was rising again this late summer and fall, likely a reflection of the cooling housing market.

In September, the rate was two points above 2005 and essentially the same as in 2003. In October, it was four points higher than a year ago and two points over 2003, and in November it was six points ahead of 2005 and three points higher than in 2003.

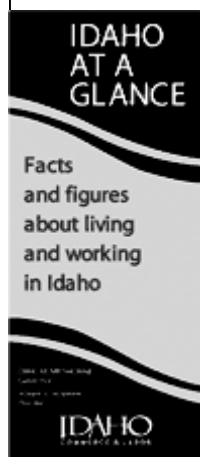
With the likely return to a more normal growth rate in the coming years, the construction sector, just like the retail sector, is likely to continue expanding as Idaho's population keeps growing faster than the national average, but the expansion rate should be much slower than over the past four years.

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## ON THE WEB

### IDAHO AT A GLANCE. . .

The page pictured at the right is an excerpt from the brochure, Idaho at a Glance, which is available on Idaho Commerce & Labor's labor market information Web site, <http://lmi.idaho.gov>.



It includes information useful to people who are moving to Idaho, such as information sources, employment, wages, climate, housing costs, education, recreation, quality of life and more.

To get a copy of the brochure, download it from the Web site or send an e-mail request to [lmi@cl.idaho.gov](mailto:lmi@cl.idaho.gov).

## IDAHO AT A GLANCE

We are pleased to have the opportunity to answer your questions about what it is like to live and work in this beautiful part of America. We hope you find the following information useful.

### EMPLOYMENT

Idaho has a strong and diversified economy. While the traditional resource-based industries of agriculture, forest products, and mining continue to contribute to the economy, high-tech, tourism, retail trade, healthcare, and business and information services are growth sectors. As in any economy, employment growth in Idaho is not uniform. In the past few years, some counties experienced strong growth, some remained unchanged, and some declined. After slow employment growth in 2002 and 2003, economic activity in 2004 added over 15,000 jobs statewide. In 2005 and 2006, the state's economy is expected to grow more slowly, adding jobs at a rate of about 1.7 percent per year; a rate that is expected to exceed the national average.

For employment opportunities in both the public and private sectors, contact Idaho Commerce & Labor at 317 W. Main Street, Boise, Idaho 83735 or any of the 24 local offices throughout the state. Addresses and phone numbers of these offices are in the directory on the Commerce & Labor home page [cl.idaho.gov](http://cl.idaho.gov). Idaho's larger communities also are served by excellent private firms that match job seekers with employment opportunities in the private sector.

### AVERAGE CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE

	2004
Civilian Labor Force	703,067
Unemployment	33,339
Percent Unemployment	4.7%
Total Employment	669,728

### NONFARM PAYROLL JOBS

	2004
Total	587,081
Construction	39,670
Manufacturing	61,444
Retail & Wholesale Trade	98,834
Transportation & Warehousing	17,058
Financial Activities	27,867
Professional & Business Service	73,228
Educational & Health Services	65,115
Leisure & Hospitality Services	55,566
Government	114,299

### AVERAGE HOURLY EARNINGS BY INDUSTRY - 2004

Construction	\$14.95
Manufacturing	19.95
Retail Trade	10.72
Wholesale Trade	17.76
Transportation & Warehousing	13.00
Financial Activities	17.56
Professional & Business Services	15.64
Educational & Health Services	13.65
Leisure & Hospitality Services	5.48
Information	17.51

### MEDIAN HOURLY WAGE BY OCCUPATION - 2005

Financial managers	\$26.23
General & operations managers	24.58
Computer programmers	25.07
Computer systems analysts	29.53
Electronics engineers	35.90
Accountants & auditors	20.50
Retail salespersons	8.96
Office clerks, general	10.74
Cashiers	7.84
Exec. secretaries & admin. assistants	13.76
Receptionists & information clerks	10.02
Electrical & electronic equip. assemblers	11.58
Assemblers & fabricators	8.56
Electricians	21.30
Helpers, construction trades	10.43
Carpenters	14.05
Welders, cutters, solderers, & brazers	13.88
Truck drivers, heavy & tractor-trailer	14.52
Logging equipment operators	18.19
Crushing, grinding, & polishing machine setters, operators, & tenders	13.09
Janitors & cleaners	8.73
Registered nurses	22.66
Child, family, & school social workers	13.80
Medical & clinical lab technicians	13.90
Nursing aides, orderlies, & attendants	8.83
Cooks, restaurant	8.36

# Glossary of Labor Market Terms

**Agriculture Employment:** Persons on agriculture payrolls who work or receive pay for any period during the survey week. This includes owners, operators, unpaid family members who work at least 15 hours a week, and hired laborers.

**Average Hourly Earnings/Average Weekly Hours:** The average total money earnings earned by production or non-supervisory workers for selected industries. The average number of hours worked by production or non-supervisory workers including overtime, paid vacation, and sick leave. The data is collected for the week including the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month.

**Average Weekly Earnings:** Average Hourly Earnings multiplied by Average Weekly Hours.

**Civilian Labor Force:** A count of non-institutional persons 16 years of age and over residing within a specific geographic area, excluding members of armed forces, who are classified as employed, unemployed and seeking employment, or involved in a labor dispute.

**Consumer Price Index (CPI):** A national index measuring changes over time in the price of a fixed market basket of goods and services. There are two indexes—the All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) represents the buying habits of about 80 percent of the non-institutional population of the United States, and the Urban Wage & Clerical Workers (CPI-W) represents 40 percent of the population.

**Covered Employers:** Employers who are subject to state and federal Unemployment Insurance laws.

**Durable Goods:** Also known as “hard goods” because they include items manufactured or provided by wholesalers with a normal life expectancy of three years or more.

**Employed:** Individuals, 16 years of age or older, who worked at least 1 hour for pay or profit or worked at least 15 unpaid hours in a family business during the week including the 12<sup>th</sup> day of the month. Individuals are also counted as employed if they had a job but did not work because they were: ill, on vacation, in a labor dispute, prevented from working because of bad weather, or temporarily absent for similar reasons.

**Initial Claim:** Any notice of unemployment filed to request (1) a determination of entitlement to and eligibility for compensation or (2) a second or subsequent period of unemployment within a benefit year or period of eligibility.

**Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA):** Combinations of counties in which at least half the residents live in an urban center of 50,000 or more and the rest have significant commuting ties to that central county. The Office of Management and Budget designates the MSAs. Idaho has five MSAs: Boise MSA including Ada, Canyon, Boise, Gem and Owyhee counties; Bonneville MSA including Bonneville and Jefferson counties; Pocatello MSA including Bannock and Power counties; Lewiston MSA including Nez Perce County and Asotin County, Wash.; Coeur d’Alene MSA including Kootenai, Boundary, Bonner, Benewah and Shoshone counties.

**Micropolitan Statistical Area (MicSA):** Combinations of counties in which at least half the residents live in urban

centers totaling at least 10,000—or 5,000 living in a single urban center—and the rest have significant commuting ties to that central county. The Office of Management and Budget designates the MicSAs. Idaho has three MicSAs: Burley MicSA including Cassia and Minidoka counties; Rexburg MicSA including Madison and Fremont counties; Twin Falls MicSA including Twin Falls and Jerome counties.

**Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment:** Persons on nonfarm establishment payrolls (including employees on paid sick leave, paid holiday, or paid vacation) who work or receive pay for any part of the week including the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month. It is a count of jobs by place of work. It does not include self-employed, unpaid volunteer or family workers, domestic workers in households, military personnel and persons who are laid off, on leave without pay, or on strike for the entire reference period.

**Nondurable Goods:** Also known as “soft goods” because they include items manufactured or provided by wholesalers that generally last for only a short period of time (three years or less).

**Seasonally Adjusted:** Data is seasonally adjusted to remove the impact of regular events that occur at the same time every year such as the effect of cold weather on outdoor activities, the Christmas holiday, or the summer influx of youth into the labor market.

**Small Labor Market Areas (SLMA):** Combinations of counties with significant ties through commuting patterns but no urban centers with populations of 10,000 or more. The Office of Management and Budget designates the SLMAs. Idaho has two SLMAs: Hailey SLMA including Blaine and Camas counties; Grangeville SLMA including Lewis and Idaho counties.

**Unemployed:** Those individuals, 16 years of age or older, who do not have a job but are available for work and actively seeking work during the week including the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month. The only exceptions to these criteria are individuals who are waiting to be recalled from a layoff and individuals waiting to report to a new job within 30 days—these, too, are considered unemployed.

**Unemployment Insurance:** Unemployment Insurance is a program for the accumulation of funds paid by employers, to be used for the payment of Unemployment Insurance to workers during periods of unemployment which are beyond their control.

**Unemployment Rate:** The number of persons unemployed expressed as a percentage of the labor force.

**Weekly Benefit Amount:** The amount payable to a claimant for a compensable week of total unemployment.

**Weeks Claimed:** The number of weeks that unemployed workers claimed Unemployment Insurance benefits.

**Weeks Compensated:** The number of weeks for which compensation was actually paid.